PORTRAITS OF KANT: REFLECTIONS FROM 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

VOLUME I

Kant at 44. Oil on canvas (69 × 45 cm) by Johann Gottlieb Becker (1768). "Kant version." Zh-1024 / PGHG KP-7244 © Perm State Art Gallery.

PORTRAITS OF KANT AS CHILD AND STUDENT

REFLECTIONS FROM 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

VOLUME I

Edited by Steve Naragon

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
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PREFACE
Kant's Life

"Three new biographies have appeared on Kant. The life of this great man, however, cannot contain much of interest. His greatest deeds occurred . . . in his study with pen in hand, and this he did not know how to use very well. Had he a better understanding of how to write he would have found so many more friends."
– *Aurora* [8 July 1805]

The quote above was the entirety of a notice on the front page of *Aurora*, a Munich newspaper, of the three primary biographical memoirs of Kant by Borowski, Jachmann, and Wasianski that appeared within a few months of his death on 12 February 1804. Continuing the insult, this notice was immediately followed by a rather longer announcement of a new biography of J. G. Herder – Kant's once admiring student who later became a bitter opponent and who had died the previous year – noting that the biography of Herder was "much too short for so great a genius."

Unlike many fables and much fiction, the narratives constituting an actual life are filled with ambiguities and conflicting evidence, and this was certainly true of Kant's life. The present work collects together hundreds of observations written down by Kant's contemporaries – most of them not so discouraging as the notice above, although some are. Together they form a cumulative account of Kant's life told through the words of those who knew him personally. Some of the portraits of Kant presented here are also pictorial, with all the known visual representations prepared from life presented in "Kant's Appearances" (Volume 3).

These three volumes are not about Kant's philosophical system, over which countless bottles of ink have already been drained. While anyone new to Kant

will learn something here about his philosophy, the present focus is on something of lesser scope and significance, but still important: The life of the man as understood by those who knew him, along with the world in which he lived and from which sprang his remarkable ideas.

Very few readers will recognize most of the authors in these volumes, only a few of whom have enjoyed any prominence in the history of ideas, and most have not appeared in English until now. They each have an entry in the **Biographical List of Contributors** at the beginning of volume one.

Kant's life is divided here into three volumes: as a **Child and Student**, as a **Professor and Socialite**, and as a **Philosopher and World-Citizen**. This is loosely chronological, with an eye towards certain themes, and the story is told by people who knew Kant in various capacities, some quite well, and occasionally by Kant himself when he allows himself an autobiographical remark.

OVERVIEW OF THE SOURCES

The central texts are a handful of biographical sketches published shortly after Kant's death. The most significant are by three clergymen – **Borowski**, **Wasianski**, and **Jachmann** – all published in 1804 by the same Königsberg publisher and by Easter 1804 in an edition collecting all three under one cover. These are joined by two more published that year, by **Hasse** and **Metzger**, and **Rink's** biography of 1805. Earlier than all of these is a short book by the Königsberg physician **Mortzfeldt** (1802) and a treasure trove of material collected by **Wald**, whose task as the professor of rhetoric was to present the official memorial speech for Kant given two months after his death; these materials were later published in Reicke (1860), but they stem from the early spring of 1804. Add to this the various letters and diary entries written by Kant's friends and associates while he was still alive – **Hamann**, **Hippel**, and **Scheffner** are key sources in Königsberg – and accounts by travelers who paid Kant a visit. A few memoirs were also written long after the fact, such as those by **Hagen** (1848) and **Reusch** (1848).

All of the above, in varying degrees, are primarily firsthand accounts. After these come the clearly secondhand sources, the earliest written in French by **Denina** (1790) as part of his collection of short biographies of prominent Prussians. A longer sketch appeared by a Scot named **Richardson** (1799), an interested outsider who had never met Kant nor been to Königsberg but was acquainted with a few of his students and had translated and amended an account by an anonymous "L.F." who had presumably visited Königsberg and interacted with Kant. There are also scatterings of anonymous reports appearing in distant newspapers near the end of Kant's life and directly after (some of which were almost certainly written by people from Königsberg who knew Kant personally), as well as a thorough, well-documented two-volume

biography, also anonymous (1804) and traditionally attributed to **Mellin**, but all clearly secondhand and for the most part drawn from sources mentioned above, and therefore not excerpted in these volumes.

"I take it for granted that all people of education will acknowledge some interest in the *personal* history of Immanuel Kant, however little their taste or their opportunities may have made them acquainted with the history of Kant's philosophical opinions. A great man, though in an unpopular path, must always be an object of curiosity. To suppose a reader thoroughly indifferent to Kant, is to suppose him thoroughly unintellectual; and, therefore, though in reality he should happen *not* to regard Kant with interest, it would still be amongst the fictions of courtesy to presume that he *did*. On this principle I make no apology to any reader, philosophic or not, Goth or Vandal, Hun or Saracen, for detaining him upon a short sketch of Kant's life and domestic habits, drawn from the authentic records of his friends and pupils."

– Thomas De Quincey [1862, 3: 99]

Introduction

Kant as Child and Student

MEYER

> "He essentially never left his hometown of Königsberg during his life, traveling no more than a few miles away – and yet he was one of the most knowledgeable experts of the physical and moral constitution of our earth and its inhabitants."
> – Biester[1]

Nothing comes from nothing. Everything comes from somewhere. And Kant came from Königsberg.

Immanuel Kant was born and died in Königsberg, a major seaport in the southeast corner of the Baltic Sea and the political and cultural capital of the Duchy of Prussia, tucked between Poland to the south and west and the Duchy of Lithuania to the north and east. The legend is that Kant never left Königsberg; the truth is that he never got more than 150 kilometers away. It is both a legend and the truth that Kant was quite literally provincial in his travels, but a more relevant truth is that this supposedly backwater Königsberg offered Kant an expansive window onto the world and, combined with his intelligence and voracious curiosity, resulted in a remarkably cosmopolitan philosopher who was grounded in the local but fully alive to the global.

[1]From Biester's obituary in the *Neue Berlinische Monatsschrift*, April 1804.

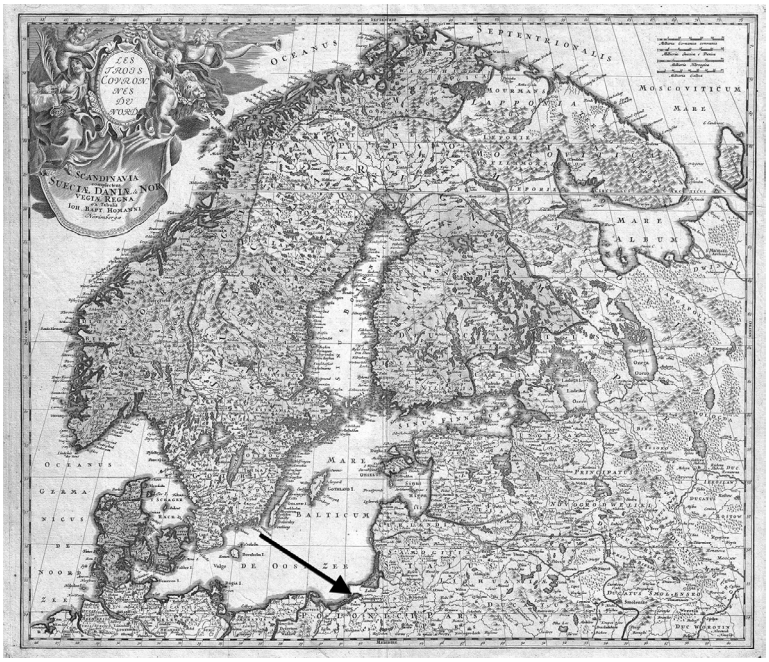

FIGURE 1: Scandinavia, 1720. Hand-colored copper engraving (48 × 56 cm) by Johann Baptist Homann (Nuremberg), shown here with an arrow marking Königsberg in the southeast corner of the Baltic Sea, just upriver from the mouth of the Pregel. Image courtesy of Wikimedia (CC PDM 1.0).

This first of three volumes is focused on Kant's early years, from his birth until his return to Königsberg after his years as a *Hofmeister* (private tutor) to begin a teaching career at the university there.

Kant was born into the dawning light of 22 April 1724, a Saturday, and since this was the name-day in the Prussian calendar for "Emanuel" that is what our philosopher was named by his parents, Anna and Johann Kant. Apparently unknown to Kant, who would often tell this story when explaining the origin of his name, this calendar of name-days was peculiar to Prussia (and here I mean Kant's Prussia, what later was called East Prussia, this territory around Königsberg). Had Kant been born in Berlin on 22 April, they would have named him "Lothar."[2]

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[2]According to that calendar, 26 March was the name-day for Emanuel; see Reicke [1860, i], who was unable to determine how this discrepancy in the calendars came about.

We have no records of when Kant began attending his neighborhood German school, just a few blocks down the street at the St. George Hospital, although he likely began attending when he was five or six,[3] similar to children today. Public schooling was still relatively new in Königsberg and the rest of Europe, but there were about a dozen of these small schools scattered around the city, each affiliated with a church and available to girls and boys alike. They were called "German schools" because the instruction was in German, except for one school each for Lithuanian-, Polish-, and French-speaking children. This would be the only schooling that most of the children would ever receive. There were aspirations in Königsberg at the time to introduce vocational schools – with separate programs for the boys and girls, as would be expected for that time – but these schools failed to develop. Boys wishing to pursue university studies, however, needed to enroll in a Latin school, preferably by the age of ten, and there were five such schools in Königsberg: the three Latin *Gymnasia* from each of the original cities that made up Königsberg (Altstadt, Kneiphof, and Löbenicht), the Castle School (often referred to as the "German Reformed School"), and the pietist *Collegium Fridericianum*, or Friedrich's College, named after King Friedrich I (1657–1713), who granted it a royal privilege in 1701, and for a time served as a model *Gymnasium* for all of Prussia. Each of these schools had room for boarders, but with the city schools this was in an associated "poor house," providing for children whose families lived in the city; the *Collegium Fridericianum*, on the other hand, drew many boarding students from beyond the city, with space for about fifty.[4] On top of these they also accepted day students, of which Kant was one (more on this school later in Chapter 8, "Pupil").

At the age of eight, in April 1732 and with a few years of schooling from St. George's, Kant was enrolled in the *Collegium Fridericianum*. This happened with the help of his family's pastor, **Franz Albert Schultz** (1692–1763), a newly arrived professor of theology at the university. In later years Kant felt a deep gratitude towards Schultz for his kind attention that provided him with an education more appropriate for his abilities.

KANT'S ROUTE TO SCHOOL

Kant walked to and from the *Collegium Fridericianum* every weekday for eight years until he was sixteen (April 1732 to September 1740). Children began

[3]Zippel notes that five years was the youngest age for children to begin school [1898, 93].

[4]There were also two smaller schools in Königsberg that could prepare students for the university. The Royal Orphanage, built in 1701 just inside the city walls next to the Sackheim Gate had room for thirty boys "from good families," and offered Latin classes for the university bound, and the Gröben Scholarship House had space for six boarders, and offered a more exclusive curriculum, accepting students only once they "could perform Latin excercises well" [Goldbeck 1782, 153–60].

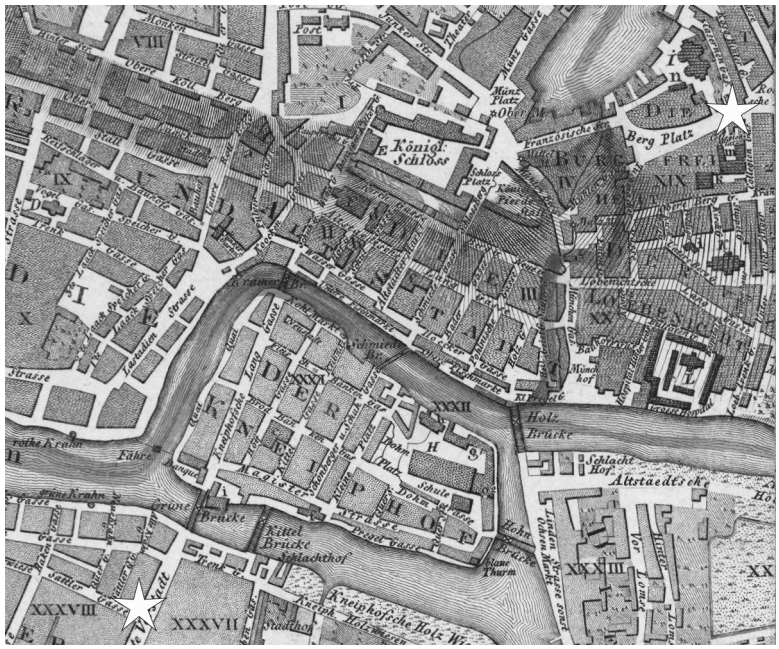

FIGURE 2: Kant's walk to school. Stars mark Kant's childhood home (bottom-left) and the *Collegium Fridericianium* (top-right). Detail from the Königsberg city map engraved by Paulus Schmidt (1809) included as an inset to the Schrötter and Engelhardt map of Prussia (1802–10). Image courtesy of the David Rumsey Map Collection.

their studies at the *Gymnasium* at various ages, but ten was considered a good age to assure the pupil would be ready to matriculate at the university by age eighteen.[5] This suggests that Kant might have been younger than many of his classmates, but it was not unusual to see students beginning their university studies while still only fourteen or fifteen. Much depended on their fluency in Latin.

Classes at the *Collegium* began at 7 a.m. and ended at 4 p.m. At such a northerly latitude there were seventeen-hours of daylight in June, but only seven in December, when the sun would not rise until 9 a.m. and set late afternoon, not long after Kant started for home, so his half-hour walk in the winter months would have been dark and cold, especially in the morning. One would like to think Kant's mother, or at least his sister Regina, who was five years older, would have walked with him during his younger years – or perhaps there were other children in his neighborhood making the same journey. The walking distance from Kant's home to the *Collegium* was about

[5]Zippel [1898, 111].

1.5 kilometers and with a number of possible routes available. The only near certainty is that each day he would cross the Green Bridge onto Kneiphof, after which he would cross one or two other bridges to reach the Löbenicht district where the school was located. If he took the route around the castle, then he would have passed within a stone's throw of his future house on Prinzessinstraße.

ANDREAS MEYER

Andreas Meyer was visiting Königsberg in August 1770, where ten years earlier he had studied at the university. Among the various descriptions of the city that Meyer recorded was one of young Kant's neighborhood and of the Green Bridge that he crossed every morning and late afternoon on his way to and from school.

FIGURE 3: River life, looking west along the south arm of the Pregel towards the Green Bridge. The stock exchange (*Börse*) and the spire of the Green Gate are to the right. Kant's childhood home, had it not burned down, would have been just to the left of the picture, behind the warehouses. Two loading cranes – the Green Crane on the left bank and Red Crane on the right – are beyond the bridge, and the Polish barges described by Rosenkranz (Chapter 5) are in the foreground. Pastel (1810), possibly by Wilhelm Barth. Image courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett / Jörg P. Anders (CC PDM 1.0).

> Before entering the suburbs of the Kneiphof, one crosses the so-called Green Bridge, next to which is the beautiful stock exchange,[6] decorated with its elegant paintings. It is a pleasant view from this bridge, to view the ships, the boats, and the crowds of people occupying the river Pregel itself and its banks; from sun-up to sun-down there is a constant trade at work in this place. But one also has the opportunity here to become acquainted with the rabble of Königsberg, from whom, if one understands the Low German language, one hears expressions and curses [99] that one would not expect in a well-mannered city, not even from the rabble. – The first suburb [*Vorstadt*][7] is in fact beautiful, whether considering the construction of the houses or the length and width of the streets. The people gather here in great numbers since there is always something to do, but no one is busier than the innumerable swarm of Polish Jews[8] in their torn and long black clothing smelling of garlic and onions. [**Source**: Meyer 1777, 98–9]

This was the world in which our young Kant grew and learned.

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[6]There have been at least four versions of the Kneiphof stock exchange (Börse), with the first three located on the north bank of the south branch of the Pregel (or "Old Pregel"), built on piles over the river. The first two versions, visible in two early prospects of the city (Bering 1613 [Fig. 5, p. 32] and Merian 1652 [Fig. 10, p. 87]), were roughly the same in basic appearances (and perhaps Merian is drawing from Bering's image), consisting of two long rooms running north–south (gables facing toward the river) and built against the east side of the Green Bridge, although the second, built in 1624, appears to have a substantial footprint on the island as well, extending over the river on piles and joined to the bridge. A century later Lilienthal [1726, 486] proclaimed this building to "outshine every other exchange in Europe because of its pleasing location," and this was the building that Kant would have known, featuring statues of Mercury and Neptune, the coats of arms of the three original cities of Königsberg, and images of sirens and sea monsters on the ceiling, but by the end of the 18th century was badly dilapidated and in need of replacement. A third building, , has a distinctively new design with paired Ionic columns, as seen in the illustrations here from the early 19th century [Minden 1870; Boetticher 1897, 357–60; Albinus 1985, 42; Gause 1996, 2: 198]. This third building stood until 1875, when a new and much larger exchange was built across the river in the vordere Vorstadt, and which still stands although now housing the Kaliningrad Museum of Fine Arts.

[7] This would be the *vordere Vorderstadt*, where Kant was born and spent his childhood.

[8]There must have been a large Jewish community in this neighborhood where Kant grew up, since the city's first synagogue was built here in 1756, on a side street (Schürlingsdam, later named Synagogenstraße) just a few hundred meters south of Kant's old home. This burned down in 1811 and was rebuilt, and in 1894–6 a much larger second synagogue was built on the Lomse (just east of the Kneiphof island); this was destroyed by the Nazis during *Kristallnacht* in 1938 [Albinus 1985, 142, 311].

IN WHAT FOLLOWS . . .

This volume is divided into three parts: (1) "Sketches of Kant's Life" introduces our main primary biographical sources; (2) "Growing Up in Königsberg" offers a brief account of the city of Königsberg and what we know of Kant's immediate family and his childhood; and (3) "Kant as Student" follows Kant from grade school through the university and his six years serving as a *Hofmeister* with two families, concluding with reflections on Kant's moral character.

Part One: Sketches of Kant's Life

1 Three Early Sketches and an Obituary

Three early sketches published in Kant's lifetime are presented here: Denina (1790), Richardson (1799), and Mortzfeldt (1802). The first is brief enough to be given in full, while Richardson's and Mortzfeldt's are spread across various chapters (with the latter abridged), but we begin with Biester's 1804 obituary.

2 Memorial Address

Samuel Wald, the Professor of Rhetoric, delivered Kant's memorial address on 23 April 1804, the day after what would have been Kant's eightieth birthday. It is presented here in its entirety.

3 Main Biographies of 1804

Three clergymen – Borowski, Jachmann, and Wasianski – published substantial memoirs of Kant shortly after his death. These are translated with minor abridgement, introduced in this chapter and then scattered across the remaining chapters.

4 Shorter Sketches

Three shorter accounts written by colleagues of Kant's at the university – Hasse (Oriental languages), Metzger (medicine), and Rink (theology and Oriental languages) – are introduced here and otherwise spread across the other chapters. The accounts by Hasse and Metzger are presented nearly in full, while Rink's is heavily abridged.

Part Two: Growing Up in Königsberg

5 18th-Century Königsberg

Kant's life is so closely tied to his hometown of Königsberg that the former is hardly to be understood without some familiarity with the latter. Much of this chapter comes from Baczko's late 18th-century account of the city.

6 Kant's Family

Nine children were born to Johann and Regina Kant, six of whom survived early childhood. Immanuel was the second of these and the older of two sons. He had four sisters (one older, three younger) and a brother who was the last born and nearly twelve years younger. The father Johann was a harness maker and Regina the daughter of a harness maker. The three sisters who married all found tradesmen as well: a shoemaker, a wigmaker, and a wool-weaver. The two sons attended the university, and Johann married and had children of his own.

7 Kant's Childhood

Little is known of Kant's childhood, but what we do know is collected here. He is said to have been happy and clever and forgetful. His time in school is treated in a later chapter.

Part Three: Kant as Student

8 Pupil

Kant's early schooling consisted of a year or two in the neighborhood school and then eight years across town at the model Latin school, the *Collegium Fridericianum*. We have reports of his course work, school friends, and teachers.

9 University Student

Here we find Kant making ends meet in student lodgings, attending lectures in the professor's homes, and encountering for the first time the Newtonian worldview and the philosophical approach of Christian Wolff.

10 *Hofmeister*

Children in the countryside and smaller towns might receive their early education from a live-in tutor, or *Hofmeister*, if the parents could afford this, and often this *Hofmeister* would later accompany the student to the university and attend classes with them. Kant spent six years as a *Hofmeister* with two different families in their homes.

11 Kant's Character

Jachmann, Borowski, Wasianski, as well as Mortzfeldt and Hasse, all discuss Kant's moral character at length. On this topic, see also Metzger ("Shorter Sketches") and Wasianski's discussion of Kant's mother ("Kant's Childhood"), both in this volume.

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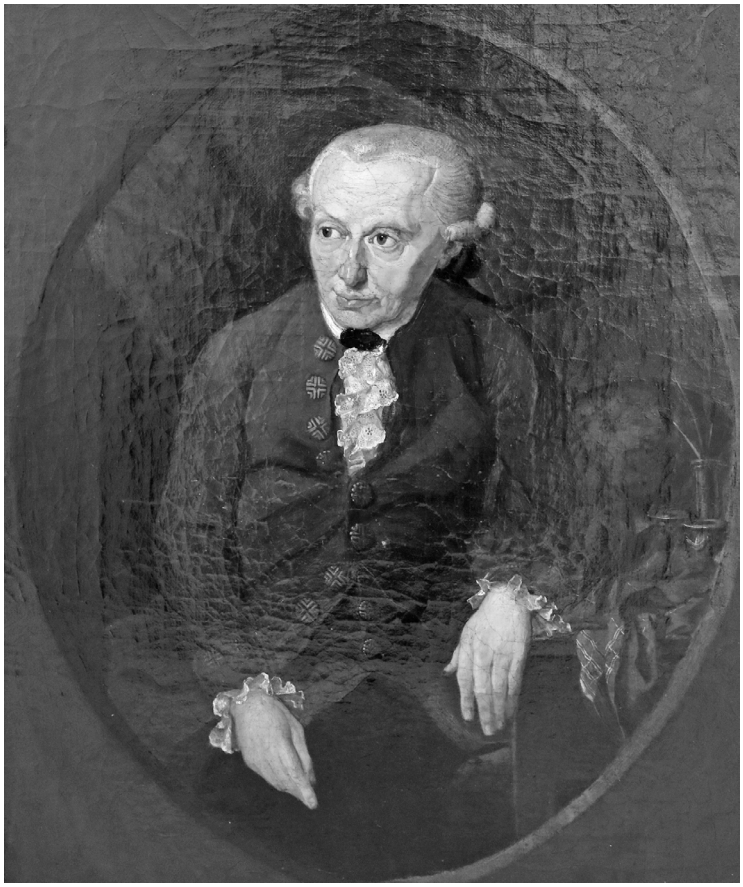
VOLUME II



Kant at 67. Oil on canvas (36.8 × 31 cm) by Gottlieb Döbler (1791) or a copyist. "Kiesewetter version." ID: MSK0074 © Stiftung Königsberg / Ostpreußisches Landesmuseum.

PORTRAITS OF KANT AS PROFESSOR AND SOCIALITE

REFLECTIONS FROM 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

VOLUME II

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Introduction

Kant as Professor and Socialite

KANT, GOLDBECK

> "On this do I ground myself. I have marked out the path I want to keep. I am starting my course and nothing will prevent me from continuing it."
> – Kant (1747)

> "I have for some thirty years given two lectures aimed at *knowledge of the world*, namely *anthropology* (in the winter) and *physical geography* (in the summer semester), which were attended by various sorts of people because they were popular lectures."
> – Kant (1798)[1]

The two quotes above are from the beginning and the end of Kant's professional career – the concern of this and the third volume – and they mark out its two main aspects: the first of a young scholar striking out on his own, the second of a retired professor looking back at his students.

The first quote is from Kant's first publication – *Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces* (1746–9) – appearing in the middle of the preface although it sounds more like the words one might say just before the front door slams shut behind them – in this case, the door of the university and the life of academia.

[1]From the prefaces to his first book *Living Forces* [AA 1: 10] and to his *Anthropology* [AA 7: 122n], respectively.

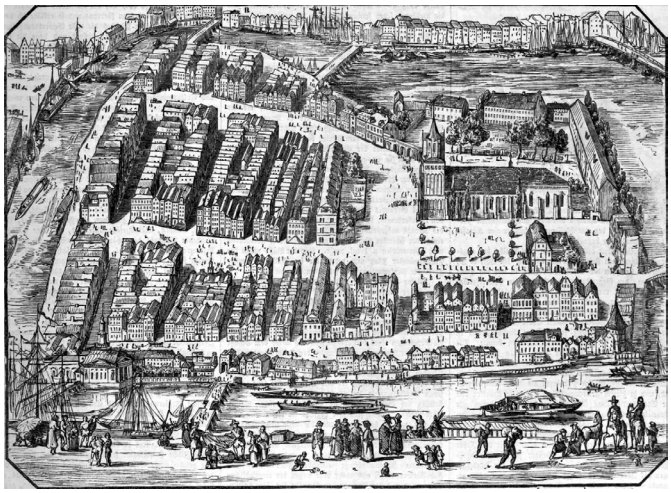


FIGURE 20: Kneiphof and the university. This woodcut (signed "AR") graced the cover of the 24 August 1844 issue of the *Illustrirte Zeitung* (Leipzig) dedicated to the university's 300th anniversary. The *Collegium Albertinum* is along the upper-right corner of the island (CC PDM 1.0).

Kant wrote this book on theoretical physics while still matriculated at the university as a student, but he was likely not attending classes at this point, having begun almost seven years earlier in the fall of 1740. He began writing in 1744 and printing began in 1746, but the book was not completed until the following year – the preface was dated 22 April 1747, Kant's twenty-third birthday – and the book as a whole was not published until the summer of 1749.[2] Kant opens his preface with a quotation from Seneca that complements the quote above:

> Nothing is more imperative than that we not, like cattle, follow the herd of those who have gone before us, going where the others have gone rather than where we ought to go.[3]

Where Kant went after slamming the door was into a six-year stint as a *Hofmeister* (or live-in tutor) in the hinterlands of East Prussia (see Volume 1,

[2]Borowski writes that "four years after entering the university, our accomplished student already began work on the *Estimation of Living Forces*" [1804, 164] – thus 1744 – and in one of the two letters of 23 August 1749, sent with copies of the book and requests for a review, Kant noted that "the printing of this little work was finished only in this year, although it was begun in 1746, as indicated on the title page" [AA 10: 1].

[3]From Seneca's *De vita beata*, chapter 1:

> *Nihil magis praestandum est, quam ne pecorum ritu sequamur antecedentium gregem, pergentes, non qua eundum est, sed qua itur.*

The English translation comes from Edwards and Schönfeld in Watkins [2012, 14].

"*Hofmeister*"). This was less a career choice than a result of financial necessity – so what sort of career did young Kant have in mind?

Had Kant been pursuing an academic career, he would not have spent those previous years working on his 240-page book *Living Forces*. What he needed instead, as one of the prerequisites for receiving a magister degree, was a Latin dissertation to present to the philosophy faculty. It is worth noting here that most students who attended the university in Kant's day did not leave with a degree, since graduation was not an appropriate goal for most students. Only those wishing to teach at the university needed a degree – a magister's degree to teach in the philosophy faculty or a doctor's degree to teach in one of the higher faculties of theology, law, or medicine. The average three years of student course work at the university approximated the model course schedules published by the government that many or most students likely followed, but students generally attended lectures for as long as they could afford or felt was useful for their intended career, whether in the church or in law and government, or medicine, or something else.

So if Kant, as a university student, had been interested in a career teaching philosophy at the university, he would have written a very different first book – both shorter and in Latin. What he wrote instead suggests that he was looking to create a name for himself outside academia in the world of letters, like those individuals whose ideas he was currently examining: Descartes, Leibniz, Maupertuis. What is more, this ambition must have remained with him during

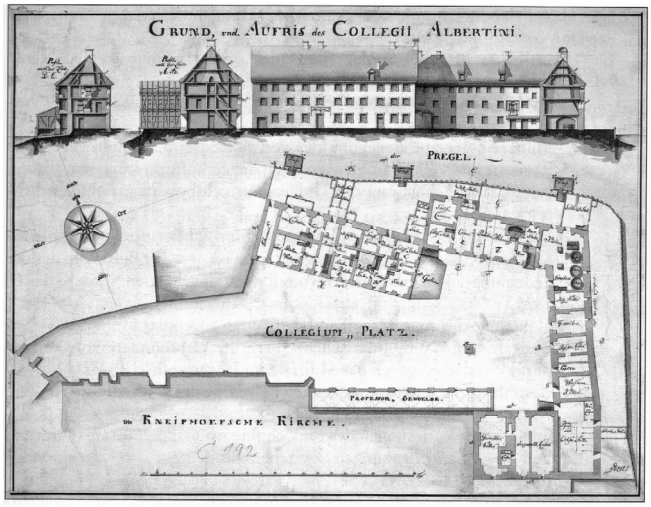


FIGURE 21: Footprint and elevations of the *Collegium Albertinum* (1810). Original in the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (GStAPK, XX. HA Hist. Staatsarchiv Königsberg, AKS, Nr. F 10.655). Image courtesy of Wikimedia (CC PDM 1.0).

much of his time as a *Hofmeister*, since it was during those years, in his free moments, that he was working up his draft for the *Theory of the Heavens*, a second book, also in German and nearly as long as the first, that offered a Newtonian account of the formation of the universe. This book was just as unsuitable for the purposes of receiving a magister's degree in preparation for a teaching career.

As best we can tell, Kant left Königsberg in August 1748 to his first placement as a *Hofmeister*, returning to Königsberg no later than 10 August 1754, when he sent a letter from there to one of his former employers, Herr von Hülsen – but Kant had probably returned earlier in spring or early summer, having already published a first essay in the local paper in June.[4] In this essay, Kant argued that the rotational speed of the earth was gradually slowing as a result of the frictional effects of the tides – a claim that actually turns out to be true. A second essay, on the age of the earth, appeared serially in the same local paper in August and September of that year.

Perhaps Kant was already planning a career at the university when he returned to Königsberg, or perhaps this was decided only once he was back. What we know with certainty is that he submitted his magister's thesis (a Latin essay on the nature of fire [AA 1: 371–84]) the following spring on 17 April 1755, sat for the oral exam on 13 May, and received his magister degree at a public ceremony on 12 June. He was then required to submit a second Latin thesis to receive the privilege of teaching at the university. This work – *New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition* [AA 1: 387–416] – was publicly defended on 27 September, and on Monday, 13 October 1755, Kant gave his first lecture of the winter semester. Thus did Kant's teaching career at the university begin; it lasted almost forty-one years.

> Whoever it was that first hit on the notion of a university and proposed that a public institution of this kind be established, it was not a bad idea to handle the entire content of learning (really, the thinkers devoted to it) *like a factory*, so to speak, by a division of labor. [Kant, *Conflict of the Faculties*, AA 7: 17; Gregor tr.]

The island of Kneiphof is about 450 meters long, east to west, about 300 meters wide at the west end and 180 meters wide upriver at the east end, dominated

[4]Kant's "Rotation of the Earth" appeared serially in the 8 and 15 June issues of the *Wochentliche Königsbergische Frag- und Anzeigungs-Nachrichten*. This was the first of four essays that Kant wrote in response to questions posed by the Royal Academy in Berlin, although he officially submitted only the third of these essays (in 1764, and for which he received second place).

by the *Dom* or cathedral and its square (the whole configuration having a footprint of about 105 by 185 meters – the church itself is 88 meters long),[5] with the cathedral running east–west midway between the two branches of the river. The university buildings occupy the northeast corner of the island, extending east from the northeast corner of the cathedral, wrapping north and then west along the water's edge so as to make a U-shaped configuration opening towards the west and the remainder of the island.

The university was founded in 1544 when Duke Albrecht bought from the city a collection of old buildings in this location, demolished them, and built what was later called the *old college*, namely, the building along the eastern edge and part of the north. Twenty-five years later, in 1569, Duke Albrecht Friedrich built the *new college* on the north side of the college square, with its east end attached to the western edge of the old college (see Figure 21, above). Apart from several auditoriums and offices, there was also an *Alumnat* that housed needy students who took their meals in the *Konviktorium*. Money was set aside for twenty-four such students, with seven places reserved for Polish students and another seven for Lithuanian.[6] Both colleges are described in more detail in the following excerpt from Goldbeck.

JOHANN FRIEDRICH GOLDBECK

Written when Kant was already a professor at the university:

> The **Collegium Albertinum**, named after the founder, is the university's only academic building. It is a double-building called the old and the new college, and is on the Pregel river between the Kneiphof cathedral and the Bishop's Court, on a large, spacious, and beautiful square, separated from the street by a large walled gate over which the portrait of **Albert** is placed. The old college consists of two connected buildings, one to [140] the east, the other to the north, but both directly on the riverbank. In the former is the theology lecture hall, which is also the *Auditorium maximum* where all the academic festivities take place and all the inaugural disputations are held. It is a very large, beautiful, and bright hall, decorated with life-size paintings of all the Prussian rulers. On the other side is the law lecture hall, and across from the *Auditorium maximum*

[5]Based on the 1809 Schmidt-engraved map and converting a Rheinländische Rute to 3.77 meters.
[6]See Goldbeck [1782, 139–41] and Arnoldt [1746, 2: 39–50]. A somewhat later description is found in Rosenkranz [1842, 2: 243–83].

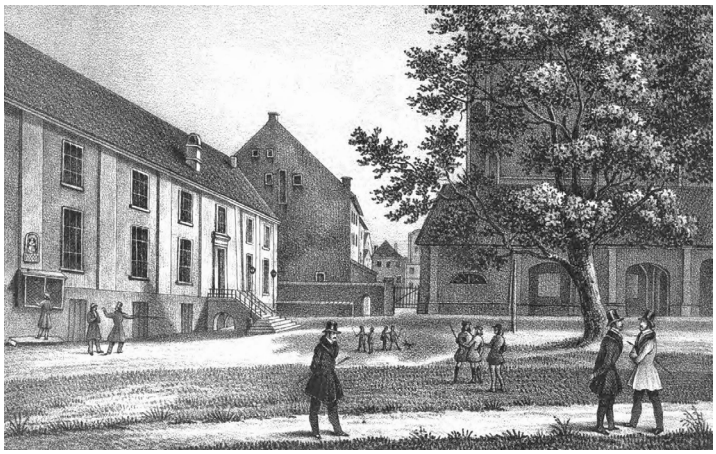


FIGURE 22: Looking south across the university courtyard. The "old college" of the *Albertinum* is to the left; behind the tree is the *Stoa Kantiana* (with Kant's tomb on the far left) and the cathedral. Lithograph by Winckelmann and Söhne (Berlin) based on a painting by Friedrich Wilhelm Siemering. Frontispiece to Witt [1844] (CC PDM 1.0).

is the *Vorsaal*, in which the academic senate, as well as each of the four faculties, hold their meetings, and which leads into the academic *Registraturgewölbe*. Above the *Auditorium maximum* are several rooms [*Stuben*] for students. On the outer wall of this building, under the *Auditorium maximum*, is the **notice board** [*schwarzes Brett*] on which everything that needs to be made public to the students is hung (by the *pedellen*[7]), and above this is the picture of the Markgraf Albrecht painted on the wall.

The north building has three floors: the lowest houses the kitchen staff [*Oekonom*]; the middle is the *Kommunität* or dining hall, which is also the philosophy lecture hall in which the magisters dispute; the upper floor houses the subinspector and some students.

[141] The new college, at whose entrance the head inspector lives, also consists of three floors. On the lowest are the apartments of the pedellen and the medical lecture hall. On the middle is the university library, and on the highest live students. On the side of the Kneiphof Cathedral, a vault was built

[7]A *pedelle* is a student hired as an errand-boy on behalf of the rector and senate, and at the *Collegium Albertinum* there were normally two of them. Their responsibilities included the distribution of programs and invitations, making the rounds of the senator's homes to collect votes or announce special meetings, posting notices on the university notice board, arresting members of the community whose untoward behavior warranted such, hauling in unregistered students to the rector for their punishment, and walking along either side of the rector during official processions, each carrying a silver scepter and dressed in red cloaks with white collars. For all this they received free lodging in the *Collegium*, some firewood, and 40 *Gulden* per year [Goldbeck 1782, 56–7].

on the square for the full professors, their wives, widows, and unmarried children [for burial]. [**Source**: Goldbeck 1782, 139–41]

IN WHAT FOLLOWS . . .

This volume is divided into four parts: (4) "Kant at the University" considers his life as a lecturer and professor at the university; (5) "Kant at Home" considers Kant's domestic life – the house he bought when he turned sixty, his various servants (especially Martin Lampe), his daily routine, and his love of conversation over dinner; (6) "Kant in the World" considers his life outside the university and his home, following him on his walks and travels, and with his friends out in society; and (7) "Some Topics of Conversation" might have taken any number of directions, but here we follow just five: marriage and women, music and the arts, Kant's religious commitments, his thoughts on Judaism, and his abiding interest in the French Revolution and its aftermath.

Part Four: Kant at the University

1 Becoming a Professor

At some point, Kant decided to pursue an academic career and here we follow Kant's steps towards becoming a professor.

2 Renting Rooms

Kant rented rooms until he bought his own house at the age of sixty, and because nearly all lectures were held in the professor's own lodgings – the several lecture halls in the university buildings were generally reserved for ceremonial occasions and public disputations – Kant needed also to rent an additional room large enough to hold his lectures.

3 Kant's Classroom

Kant lectured for eighty-two semesters, beginning with the 1755–6 winter semester and ending in the middle of the 1796 summer semester. Collected here are various accounts of Kant as a teacher.

4 Duties at the University

The senior faculty took turns serving in administrative roles at the university, as there were no permanent administrators. The two most prominent administrative roles were the deans of the four faculties and the rector of the university as a whole. There were a few other offices, but these two – dean and rector – were semester-long obligations that Kant occasionally assumed.

Part Five: Kant at Home

5 House

Just after his 60th birthday Kant moved into his newly purchased home, which lay just north of the castle on a quiet street in the very center of the city, with a garden descending into the old castle moat. The large room to one's left as you entered the front door took up the entire north end of the first floor, and this is where he held his lectures. Directly above that room, on the second floor, is where Kant entertained his dinner guests.

6 Servants

All of Europe seemed to know about Martin Lampe, Kant's long-suffering servant of forty years. What is perhaps surprising is that Lampe was working for Kant even in his earliest years when he was renting rooms. Once Kant bought a house, Lampe moved into the attic, and after a few years Kant also installed a kitchen and hired a cook, who lived in an apartment on the ground floor opposite the lecture hall and next to the kitchen. Kant's daily and domestic life cannot be understood without considering his relationship with his servants.

7 Daily Routine

Each day began with Lampe's martial cry – "It is time!" – followed by Kant's pipe and a cup of tea and a review of the morning lectures. It ended each evening with his being wrapped tight as a cocoon in his blanket. At first, Kant likely held no more tightly to his routine than the next fellow, but this grew more stable and defined and like a clock during his years with Joseph Green. This growing rigidity is also within the human norm, although with Kant perhaps turned up a few degrees. Dinner and a walk were signal moments in his daily routine, but due to their importance are treated separately.

8 Dinners with Kant

Kant loved to eat, but not alone – a practice "unhealthy for a scholar who philosophizes" since one then foregoes the differing ideas that dinner companions provide [AA 7: 279–80]. He ate with others at a local diner, or else in someone's home, but after he added a kitchen and hired a cook in 1787, he mostly ate at home – just one meal a day and always with one to five guests, although usually two. There was food and wine, but most importantly there was conversation.

9 Food and Drink

Kant's famous dinners necessarily involved food, but also talk, and here we focus on the food and drink alone. Kant definitely had his favorites and a modest buffet is presented here.

Part Six: Kant in the World

10 Daily Walks

Kant walked for his health, although his habit of walking probably began with the long walks that he took as a child with his mother. As a young lecturer he favored walking companions, but later on he needed solitude. The famous punctuality of his walks comes from later years and likely the walks home from evenings spent at Joseph Green's house. Kant's long walks fell in the afternoon after his midday meal, and while they often ventured beyond the gates of the city, they most famously wound around the square-shaped path known as the Philosopher's Walk.

11 Travels

Kant is notorious for never having left Königsberg, so there must be some discussion of his travels beyond Königsberg. During his teaching career, Kant circumnavigated the globe nearly fifty times in his lectures on physical geography, but that all took place within the vast confines of his exploring mind; the wanderings of his body extended no more than 130 kilometers within the cozy borders of Prussia.

12 Friends

Kant was a devoted and peculiar friend, drawn to individuals from a range of social circles: wealthy merchants, military officers and aristocrats, clergymen, lawyers and government officials, even a forester, and of course other professors.

13 Kant in Society

Kant was much sought after in Königsberg social circles, especially during his earlier years as a young lecturer, and he appears to have been a steady presence at the Keyserling Palace, having made the acquaintance of the count and countess during his very first years of teaching. The "gallant magister" had accomplished a steep social ascent out of his origins as a harness-maker's son.

Part Seven: Topics of Conversation

14 Women and Marriage

Kant was a lifelong bachelor and the majority of his time was spent either alone or in the company of men. Without question, his most important relationships, emotional and intellectual, were with men – other than, perhaps, his childhood relationship with his mother – but he enjoyed the company of "modest" women and several times nearly married one.

15 Music and the Arts

Kant sang, at least as a child in school, and he was often surrounded by music and musicians – there was even a close connection between the Keyserling family and Johann Sebastian Bach. Yet, although Kant wrote perceptively about the arts both when he was young (*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*, 1764) and old (*Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 1790), he otherwise had little to do with them.

16 Religion

Kant's principal work on religion was his late *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793), but he also lectured on rational theology at the end of each course of lectures on metaphysics and during four semesters gave courses of lectures devoted exclusively to that subject. Many of his writings directly address or touch upon religious matters, including his first philosophical work of length: *The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God* (1763). A sizeable body of scholarly work has been devoted to these writings. The texts presented here are of more modest scope, concerning Kant's own religious commitments as observed by those who knew him.

17 Jews and Judaism

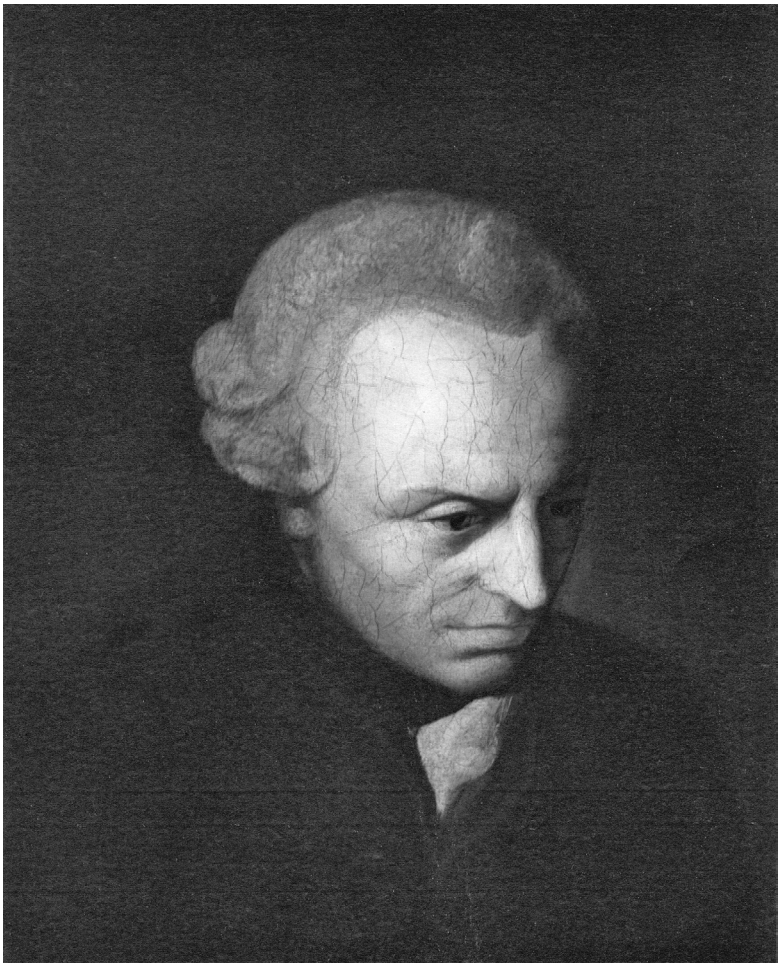
Moses Mendelssohn, intellectual leader of the Jewish community in Berlin, was a guiding star of the German Enlightenment and a respected correspondent of Kant's. The two men were connected by shared values, by their letters, by Mendelssohn's visit to Königsberg, and by the group of Jewish students attending Kant's lectures over the years – Marcus Herz, Isaac Euchel, Michael Friedländer, and others. These friendly relationships stand in bright contrast to the endemic anti-Semitism of the larger culture.

18 Revolutionary France

Kant was always interested in the social and political aspects of the human condition, and so of course also in the political events unfolding in North America, but those in France particularly captured his attention and often dominated dinner conversation during the 1790s.

PORTRAITS OF KANT: REFLECTIONS FROM 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

VOLUME III



Kant in his mid-sixties. Oil on canvas (53 × 38 cm) by an unknown artist (*c*. 1790), possibly Elisabeth Stägemann. AKG6322. © akg-images.

PORTRAITS OF KANT AS PHILOSOPHER AND WORLD-CITIZEN

REFLECTIONS FROM 18TH AND 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

VOLUME III

Edited by Steve Naragon

BLOOMSBURY ACADEMIC
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Introduction

Kant as Philosopher and World-Citizen

ROSENKRANZ, BOUTERWEK, VARNHAGEN VON ENSE

"I have come a century too early with my writings – I will be properly understood only after a hundred years and then my books will be studied again and accepted!"
— Kant (1797)[1]

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* enjoyed little notice when it first appeared in 1781 and was otherwise misunderstood. Five long years passed for that seed to sprout and grow and then quickly branch into a number of vines that were more like foreign grafts, all sharing the same root but each growing in its own

[1]This quotation comes secondhand from Friedrich August von Stägemann, an acquaintance of Kant who heard him say this in 1797. Stägemann related it to his good friend in Berlin, K. A. Varnhagen von Ense, who entered it in his diary on 6 May 1837 [1861, 1: 46]:

> Ich bin mit meinen Schriften um ein Jahrhundert zu früh gekommen; nach hundert Jahren wird man mich erst recht verstehen und dann meine Bücher aufs neue studieren und gelten lassen!

A thorough discussion of this quotation can be found in Lind [1899] and a related text occurs in Kant's *Nachlaß*, Refl. #5015 [AA 18: 61]:

> I certainly believe that this doctrine will be the only one that will be left once minds have cooled from dogmatic fever and that it must then endure forever; but I very much doubt that I will be the one who produces this alteration. In addition to the grounds that should illuminate it, the human mind also needs time to give them force and endurance. And when prejudices are combatted, it is no wonder that at the outset these efforts are disputed by means of the very same prejudices. For it is necessary first to eliminate the impressions and the old habit. I could adduce various cases where it has not been the originator of an improvement but only those who rediscovered it. [Guyer transl.]

FIGURE 54: Kant at 60. Silhouette (6.5 cm tall) by an unknown artist (1784), from Hippel's *Nachlaß*. Frontispiece to the *Altpreußische Monatsschrift*, vol. 37, issues 1/2 (1900) (CC PDM 1.0).

direction, after its own fashion, and together threatening to choke out the original rootstock.

Kant was certainly well regarded in his day, enjoying a reputation long before the first *Critique*, but his star was eclipsed even before his death in 1804. Some ideas remained in circulation – his *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790) was particularly influential for the generation immediately following – and the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), with the new philosophy it inaugurated, certainly never disappeared altogether. But consider this: An 1851 survey of philosophy professors in Prussia – there were twenty-nine of them spread across six universities (Bonn, Halle, Berlin, Greifswald, Breslau, Königsberg) and two Catholic faculties (Braunsberg, Münster) – reported these philosophical affiliations:

> one Platonist, two Aristotelians, one historical-critical, one Scholastic, one Güntherian, four Kantians, three eclectics, two Herbartians, one pseudo-Herbartian, one Schellingian,[2] one half neo-Schellingian, nine Hegelians, and one pseudo-Hegelian. [Rosenkranz 1851, 161]

[2]Namely, Schelling himself, at Berlin but no longer giving lectures.

None of those four Kantians were teaching in Kant's home university in Königsberg – indeed, there had not been a Kantian teaching there for the past twenty years[3] – nor were any Kantians to be found in the German-speaking universities outside of Prussia.

Bouterwek, an early follower of Kant's in Göttingen, began his brief 1805 memorial to Kant with an observation of this early eclipse:

> I asked myself how the news **of Kant's death** would have affected the German public ten years ago? Not without pain, I had to answer: "Rather differently than today!"
>
> [ii] I listened whether some impartial voice might be heard to set the tone, just now and at the right time, after the frenzy of attachment to a literal Kantianism had passed, and another more dangerous frenzy of disparaging even a Kantian understanding as a **common** understanding: **to remind us in a few words understandable to any educated German of Kant's genius and merit, not eulogistically, but also not without** [iii] **warmth?**
>
> But I heard no such voice. Not being Kantians, are they unwilling to pronounce Kant's name with respect, afraid of being shouted down? Well, this danger must at least not concern anyone still needing to repudiate the suspicion that, having been an admirer of Kant, he has now become a cold reprover and opponent of this unforgettable teacher of so many excellent minds and so many respectable [iv] people. [Bouterwek 1805, i–iv]

The generation following was no kinder to Kant's memory, judging from Varnhagen von Ense's preface to Erhard's *Autobiography* (1830) published the year before Hegel's death. Erhard had been a great admirer of Kant's (see Chapter 7, "Promoters and Admirers"), something his 19th-century readers would have found baffling:

> The Kantian philosophy, the highest light of those days, appears here in highly worthy and remarkable personalities, having left the school and passed over to life itself. This light was already inadequate for those personalities, sometimes stopping them short and sometimes exposing them to obscure missteps and pitfalls, and since then it has been entirely extinguished in the sciences, unless absorbed into later insights and united with higher rays. It

[3]Kant stopped lecturing in July 1796 but retained his professorship until his death, so he was not replaced until 1805, when Wihelm Traugott Krug was called from Frankfurt/Oder, and when Krug moved on to a position at Leipzig in 1809, he was replaced by Johann Friedrich Herbart, who returned to his home university at Göttingen in 1833 and was replaced by Karl Rosenkranz, who taught there until his retirement in 1874. Dietzsch [2003, 265–89] offers a detailed account of finding Kant's replacement.

> will always raise eyebrows to call the attention of a progressive, demanding and prolific generation back to this earlier stage, of which the majority will have no memory and in which they would recognize no value. [Varnhagen von Ense, in Erhard 1830, n.p.]

These words were written twenty-five years after Kant's death. In this brief time, both Kant and his Critical Philosophy appear to have been swept aside. Within the span of yet another generation, however, pockets of neo-Kantian thought developed in Germany and with the usual ebb and flow, a growing interest in Kant's ideas has continued into the 21st-century.

IN WHAT FOLLOWS . . .

This volume is divided into three parts: (8) "Kant as Scholar" collects together anecdotes regarding Kant's writing and reading habits and his interests in the various sciences; (9) "Kant as Celebrity" recounts Kant's many visitors, his promoters and admirers, and his reception in the philosophical community; and (10) "Kant as Human Being" considers Kant's physical appearance, his body with its various maladies, and finally his old age and slow descent into death, concluding with the various efforts to honor Kant's memory.

Part Eight: Kant as Scholar

1 Writing

Kant's writings are naturally at the heart of our interest in Kant and thousands of books and articles are now published each year that explore those writings, so in this section our scope is extremely modest, offering a few contemporary glimpses of his writing career, from his first work on *Living Forces* to his unfinished *Opus postumum*.

2 Reading

Kant was a voracious reader who owned few books, instead borrowing unbound signatures from his local publisher and bookseller – although for six years (February 1766 to April 1772) he also worked as the assistant librarian at the Castle Library where he enjoyed ready access to a wide collection of materials.

3 Other Sciences

Kant's earliest interests likely began during childhood walks and talks with his mother, and his earliest published writings are all centered on the natural

world. Even after he was better known for his work in philosophy proper, Kant continued to lecture every summer on physical geography and occasionally on theoretical physics. His daily dinner conversations covered every topic *other* than philosophy and typically concerned recent discoveries in the natural sciences.

Part Nine: Kant as Celebrity

4 Visiting Kant

Kant was always receiving visitors, especially in his later years, and we have written accounts from about a dozen of these. He appears to have been reliably cordial and welcoming and when he found a guest of particular interest, he was sure to be invited to dinner the following day.

5 Fichte's Visit (1791)

Johann Gottlieb Fichte was the next major figure after Kant in the canon of German Idealists and his rapid ascent before the public eye was a result of his visit to Kant in 1791. Soon viewed widely as Kant's rightful heir, their ambivalent relationship ended abruptly with Kant's 1799 public declaration that he was washing his hands of Fichte's "totally indefensible system."

6 Abegg's Visit (1798)

The pastor Johann Friedrich Abegg spent the summer of 1798 traveling from Heidelberg up to Königsberg – diary in hand – to visit his well-to-do merchant brother, attend the coronation of the new king, and meet a great many writers, politicians, businessmen, and academics, including four visits with Kant.

7 Promoters and Admirers

By the mid-1780s, with the popularization of Kant's ideas in Reinhold's *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy* (1786–7), there was not only Kant, but also Kantians, some of whom are collected or mentioned in the excerpts here, including Herder, who admired Kant but deplored the Kantians.

Part Ten: Kant as Human Being

8 Kant's Appearance

Since his earliest days as a magister, Kant was fastidious about his appearance and known for his sense of style. The contemporary assessments of the graphic representations of Kant done from life, as well as his fashion sense, are highlighted here.

9 Kant's Body

Kant openly and often discussed his body and its ailments in print, in his correspondence with others, and at the dinner table. As a topic in these volumes, Kant's body is unavoidable.

10 Old Age

Kant suffered a gradual mental and physical decline, drawn out over several years – a fate shared with most others whose lives were not cut short by accident, illness, physical violence, or poverty. His mind had already vacated the premises by the time his body died, and while these accounts will sound familiar, they are still of interest because they are of Kant.

11 Kant's End

Kant's final weeks, his death, and the two public services marking that death – the funeral in late February of 1804 and the memorial service in late April – are recounted in the excerpts here.

12 Remembering Kant

Not long after Kant's death, his friends formed a society to meet each year on his birthday for an annual "bean meal," a tradition continuing to this day. The texts collected in this epilogue concern four forms of remembrance: the collecting of Kant's relics, the writing of memoirs, renovating his gravesite, and erecting memorials.